

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13669

USIA FOR ICS/E; IEU

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT - "USA-200 YEARS" BROCHURE

REFS: (A) MOSCOW 12626; (B) USIA 24352; (C) MOSCOW 12748

1. DCM WAS CALLED TO MFA ON AUGUST 30 BY ACTING CHIEF OF  
USA DIVISION MIKHAILOV TO DISCUSS THE BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT  
DUE IN MOSCOW IN NOVEMBER.

2. READING FROM TYPED TEXT WITH PENCILLED ANNOTATIONS,  
MIKHAILOV SAID THAT HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO BROACH AN  
"UNPLEASANT SUBJECT" CONCERNING THE BROCHURE TO BE  
DISTRIBUTED TO EXHIBIT VISITORS ENTITLED "USA-200 YEARS."  
HE EXPLAINED THAT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TAKES EXCEPTION TO  
SEVERAL PASSAGES IN THE BROCHURE, BUT THAT THE REFERENCE TO  
"THE THREAT OF FASCIST AND COMMUNIST GROWTH IN THE 1930'S"  
IN ROBIN WINKS' ARTICLE ON PAGE 27, IS PARTICULARLY  
FLAGRANT FROM SOVIET POINT OF VIEW. MIKHAILOV SAID THAT  
MINISTRY INSISTED THAT THIS PASSAGE BE DELETED, OR ELSE  
DISTRIBUTION WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED. HE THEN ADDED  
WITH STRESS THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THIS "A VERY  
SERIOUS MATTER," AND REITERATED THAT  
WITHOUT DELETION OF THE OFFENDING PASSAGE, THE BROCHURE COULD  
NOT BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE EXHIBIT.

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EM THE DCM REPLIED THAT HE OF COURSE COULD NOT PROVIDE OFFICIAL ANSWER, BUT WOULD TRANSMIT MFA COMMENTS TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSIDERATION. HE ADDED, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THAT HE REGRETTED THE SOVIET APPROACH TO THIS MATTER, SINCE THE INSISTANCE ON DELETION COULD BE INTERPRETED AS ATTEMPT AT CENSORSHIP, WHICH IS MATTER OF SERIOUSNESS WITH US. IN FACT, USG MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO CONTROL CONTENT OF SOVIET PUBLICATIONS DISTRIBUTED IN U.S., EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD DISAGREE WITH MANY PASSAGES IN THESE MATERIALS. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SOVIET DEMAND ALSO MAY RAISE SERIOUS PRACTICAL PROBLEMS SINCE IT HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT BROCHURE ALREADY PRINTED.

4. MIKHAILOV REJOINED THE QUESTION IS NOT ONE OF CENSORSHIP --IF SOVIETS WISHED TO CENSOR PUBLICATION THEY WOULD REQUIRE MANY CHANGES. MINISTRY FELT STRONGLY, HOWEVER, THAT THIS PASSAGE WOULD BE TOTALLY OFFENSIVE TO RECIPIENTS AND WAS OBLIGATED TO TEST US IN ADVANCE THAT DISTRIBUTION OF PAMPHLET WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED IF PASSAGE IS RETAINED.

5. COMMENT: MFA MESSAGE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MORE CATEGORICAL: IF PASSAGE STAYS IN, DISTRIBUTION OF BROCHURE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED. SINCE MFA HAS NOW GONE ON OFFICIAL RECORD WITH THIS POSITION, WE DOUBT THAT THERE IS ANY PROSPECT OF PERSUADING SOVIETS TO RELENT. STOESEL

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